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COUNTRY East GermanyREPORT NO. TOPIC Merseburg AirfieldEVALUATION 25X1 PLACE OBTAINED 25X1ADATE OF CONTENT 9 March to 25 April 1953DATE OBTAINED 25X1A DATE PREPARED 28 May 1953REFERENCES PAGES 4 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) REMARKS 25X1X
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1. The following observations were made at Merseburg airfield from 10 through 29 March 1953:

10 March. Night flying was conducted from 6 to 11 p.m. Single and paired take-offs by MiG-15s were observed. A formation of four planes was also seen. At 5:15 p.m., source counted 13 MiG-15s and type-29 planes at the field.

14 March. From 3 to 4 p.m., six MiG-15s practiced diving over the field. Weather was 1/10 overcast.

- 25X1 16 March. At 5:30 p.m., seven MiG-15s at the eastern end of the runway. One train arrived on the spur track.

17 March. From 2 to 6 p.m., individual MiG-15s made local training flights in fair weather. About 6 p.m., six MiG-15s were parked near the eastern end of the runway.

22 March. No air activity was observed. The weather was fair. About 5 p.m., 12 MiG-15s were parked at the eastern end of the runway.

25 March. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., single MiG-15s without auxiliary fuel tanks practiced diving. The airfield was crossed at an altitude of about 100 meters. Subsequently, the planes climbed again very steeply before they made another approach.

- 25X1 Weather was 1/10 overcast, visibility about eight kilometers.

26 March. Flying was already under way at 6:30 a.m. in fair weather. Flights were made in great altitudes. Some paired take-offs were also observed.

29 March. No air activity was observed in the morning and from 2 to 3 p.m.¹

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2. When night flying was practiced at the field, a rotating searchlight was in operation at a point about 400 meters from the eastern end of the runway. The searchlight would be trucked there on a two-axle vehicle. Between the searchlight and the eastern end of the runway, red lamps had been set up 60 to 80 meters apart. Similar lamps were observed in the western extension of the runway. Two other searchlights were posted at the highest point of the airfield terrain. They were only used for landing planes. The rotating searchlight swung from north to west in an angle of about 45 degrees and would make 14 rotations before it was switched off again.

3. Air activity observed at the installation from 25 March through 21 April included:

25 March. From noon to 4 p.m., individual local training flights were made in fair weather.

26 March. There was light air activity from 2 to 6 p.m. in fair weather.

27 March. Some local training flights were made at an altitude of about 1,000 meters from noon to 4 p.m. Weather was 5/10 overcast.

28 and 29 March. No air activity was observed. Weather was overcast.

30 March. Between 7:30 a.m. and 7 p.m., five minute training flights were made.

At 6:10 p.m., four MiG-15s approaching from the east landed at the field.

31 March. From 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., local training flights were made. Weather was 8/10 overcast at an altitude of about 800 meters, visibility good.

1 April. Flying was practiced from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Weather was 2/10 overcast.

2 April. At 1:05 p.m., 18 MiG-15s approaching from the east landed. The planes remained at the field. Weather was 3/10 overcast.

3 April. From 8:20 a.m. to 4:20 p.m., individual local training flights were made and diving was practiced. Weather was overcast, the cloud base being at an altitude of 2,000 meters, and visibility was good.

Eleven MiG-15s were lined up at the eastern end of the runway, 22 other MiG-15s were observed parked near the hangars. A Pe-2 and two single-engine planes were also observed at the installation.

4 April. From 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., some local training flights were made. Weather was fair, visibility good.

5 April. No air activity was observed. Weather was 8/10 overcast.

6 April. One formation of 5 and three formations of 8 MiG-15s each took off at 7:30, 8:20, 9:30, and 10 a.m. respectively headed toward Leipzig at an altitude of about 1,500 meters. The planes involved had taken off in groups of two. At 2:35 p.m., three formations of 8, one formation of 3 and another formation of 2 MiG-15s landed in groups of two, the second plane being staggered four or five aircraft lengths to the right after the first. All the planes landed again within five minutes.

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While the 29 MiG-15s were away, four MiG-15s were parked at the eastern end of the runway.

7 April. Some local training flights were made from 12:45 to 4:50 p.m. Weather was 3/10 overcast, visibility good.

8 April. Formation flying in groups of two and four was practiced from 8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

9 April. Single MiG-15s made some local training flights from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Weather was 8/10 overcast at an altitude of 600 meters.

10 April. From noon to 6 p.m., there was light local training activity in fair weather.

11 and 12 April. No air activity was observed. Weather was fair, visibility good.

13 April. Source observed 33 MiG-15s and type-29 planes, two single-engine planes, and 1 biplane at the field. From 6 to 11 p.m., about five-minute flights were made.

14 April. Two MiG-15s practiced flying between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. The closed ceiling was at an altitude of about 300 meters, visibility 2,000 meters.

16 April. Individual planes practiced flying between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. The planes flew for about 30 minutes above the clouds. Weather was overcast at about 500 meters, visibility about 2,000 meters, with intermittent rain.

17 April. There was hardly any air activity. Weather was fair.

18 April. From 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., formation flying in groups of two and four was practiced. Weather was fair, visibility good.

19 April. No air activity was observed in fair weather.

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20 April. There was continuous air activity from 8 a.m. to 2 a.m. on 21 April. Formation flying in groups of two and four was practiced during the day, single flying at night.

21 April. There was heavy flying by individual planes during the day. Weather was fair. At night, two planes would take off at a distance of about 200 meters for about 45-minute flights. When they crossed the field at an altitude of 1,000 to 1,500 meters, they were caught in the beams of three or four searchlights followed the planes in jerks.¹

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Comment. The headquarters of a fighter division and a fighter regiment are stationed at Merseburg airfield. The heavy occupation of the installation in early April is noteworthy. Since October 1952, a total of 53 aircraft numbers has been observed in Merseburg. Of these numbers, about 10 also have been observed at other fields occupied by units of the Southern Fighter Corps. The heavy occupation of the field and the fact that it is unusually well equipped with radar sets indicates that the installation plays a major role in conjunction with air defense missions of the Southern Fighter Corps.

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